Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham inspect sports grounds, Hledan Overpass construction project in Yangon

YANGON, 18 May — Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham inspected sports grounds and Hledan Overpass construction project here this afternoon.

Accompanied by Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Union Minister for Cooperatives and for Livestock and Fisheries U Ohn Myint, Union Minister at President Office U Soe Maung, Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Khin Yi, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism and for Sports U Tin Hsan, Union Minister for Education Dr Mya Aye, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, deputy ministers, the Yangon mayor and officials, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham inspected university tennis courts of the Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) on Thaketa Road, Kamayut Township; Union Minister U Tin Hsan, Union Minister Dr Mya Aye, Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, President’s Economic Adviser Dr U Myint, Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) Director-General U Zaw Htay and Myanmar Tennis Federation President U Aung Maw Thein reported on renovation of the tennis courts and the Vice-President gave necessary instructions.

Next, the Vice-President and party went to the Hledan Overpass construction project site in Kamayut Township. At the briefing hall, Region Minister for Development Affairs Yangon Mayor U Hai Myint reported on traffic congestion at Hledan Junction, coordinated tasks of Yangon City Development Committee and duration of the project. CEO of Shwetaung Development Co Ltd U Aung Zaw Naing on digging of ditches, progress in expansion of road, digging and moving of underground electric cables, communication cables and pipelines, digging of new ditches; and Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe on expansion of Shwegondaine Junction, Tamway Junction and Bayintnaung Junction and measures for reducing traffic congestion.

In response, the Vice-President spoke of the need for perfect completion of the projects in the time of the new government, for keeping Yangon neat and clean as it is the commercial capital, for successful completion of the project in coordination with related departments as the increasing number of cars has caused traffic jam, for adoption of road network system with a master plan covering the whole city of Yangon and for letting the people know the estimated time of completion.

 Afterwards, the Vice-President and party inspected progress in expansion of the road, construction of two motorways and Bayintnaung Junction and measures for paving asphalt road and gave necessary instructions to officials. (See page 8)
Adapt or die

Through democratic reforms, we are entering a new age in which the government will have to plug all sorts of financial leaks hindering development process, or else it will become a failed state drifting away from its goal of leading its own people to prosperity and joy. First, it must find out the causes of these financial drains and their sources, and later it must find means to stop them in the most effective and less painful way to avoid unnecessary consequences and adverse effects.

Normally, most of the businesses large and small are run by the private sector in a democratic country. But some democracies have enterprises or business institutions financed or run by the government. Myanmar in its nascent stage of democracy still has many government-owned businesses most of which were set up when the country adopted socialist economy.

But now we are in the resolute democratization process that is introducing reforms in multiple sectors. As the whole economic sector is witnessing changes these government enterprises are also trying to adapt themselves to the changing trend and the market economy which democracy embraces. The important thing here is they should not become the business institutions showing financial losses or in other words financial drains. They must find means to stand on their own income in the long run as they are business organizations employing a large number of men and women. Their failure means many people will become jobless.

So, they must be well-organized and their staffs must be efficient capable of cutting expenses and increasing profits for their own survival in a democratic society where business competition is tough although business opportunities are bright. Otherwise, they will fall, and a democratically elected government will find privatization the best means to solve their problem. In this context, they have two alternatives – Adapt or die.

Union I&C Minister receives Secretary-General of CNIE and party

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 May—Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hsan received Secretary-General Mr You Jianhua of China NGO Network for International Exchange (CNIE) and party of the People’s Republic of China at his office here this morning.

During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on the opportunities to provide assistance for socio-economic development, sustainability for development of rural libraries and perpetuation.

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister for Information U Soe Win, Director-General U Thein Aung of Myanmar Radio and Television, Managing Director U Ye Tint of Printing and Publishing Enterprise, Managing Director U Zaw Min Oo of News and Periodicals Enterprise and departmental officials.—MNA

Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hsan receives Secretary-General Mr You Jianhua of China NGO Network for International Exchange (CNIE).—MNA

Dy Construction Minister inspects roads, bridges works

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 May—Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint together with the Deputy Chief Engineer of Public Works, the Mandalay Region Superintending Engineer and officials concerned and responsible persons of companies engaging in road construction works inspected roads and progress of bridges works on PyinOoLwin-Mogok Road and Mandalay-Mogok Road in Mandalay Region on 13 May.

He then gave necessary instructions on work.—MNA

Deputy H & T Minister meets JMA Chairman

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 May—Chairman, Senior Advisor Mr Hideo Watanabe of Japan-Myanmar Association (JMA) paid a call on Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung at the ministry here this morning.

The JIA Chairman during the meeting discussed preservation of old buildings in Yangon as historical evidences and proposed to build three-story luxury hotel in Yangon. The deputy minister in return explained potentials of tourism industry in Myanmar and preparations for adoption of tourism master plan.—MNA

Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint inspects PyinOoLwin-Mogok road section.—MNA

Plenary meeting on forming Pabedan Township Writers Association

Yangon, 18 May—A plenary meeting with an elected ceremony to form Pabedan Township Writers Association was held at Maha Theindawgyi Dhammayon in Pabedan Township here on 13 May morning.

It was attended by Secretary of the committee for forming Myanmar Writers Association (Central) Maung Khing Khant and township representatives, Chairman of Township Writers and Journalists Association and members.

On the occasion, the Patron gave an opening speech Chairman of Township Writers and Journalists Association extended greetings.

The meeting recognized Dr Khin Maung Nyo as secretary, Wakema Soe Myint Aung as treasurer, Tin Hu and Shwebo Thi Thiri Malaras members, including journalist Than Swe (Pabedan) and Wakema Soe Myint Aung as conference representatives.

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He then gave necessary instructions on work.—MNA

MNA
US eyes funding boost for Israel’s “Iron Dome” shield

WASHINGTON, 18 May—The Pentagon will seek to provide Israel with an additional $70 million in the coming months for its short-range rocket shield, known as the “Iron Dome,” Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said after a meeting with his Israeli counterpart on Thursday.

So far, the United States has provided $205 million to support the Iron Dome, manufactured by Israel’s state-owned Raphael Advanced Defence Systems Ltd. The system uses small radar-guided missiles to blow up in midair Katusha-style rockets with ranges of 3 miles to 45 miles, as well as mortar bombs.

But top Republicans have criticized President Barack Obama for what they described as inadequate funding of US-Israeli missile defence cooperation in his fiscal 2013 budget request released in February amid deficit-reduction requirements.

Legislation moving through the Republican-controlled US House of Representatives would give Israel additional $600 million for the Iron Dome system through 2015, and some House lawmakers are seeking a deal with Israel to share production of the Iron Dome system with US weapons manufacturers.

Obama’s fiscal 2013 budget request calls for $3.1 billion in security assistance to Israel, part of a 10-year, $30 billion US commitment, none of which was scheduled to fund Iron Dome. On Thursday, Panetta said the Pentagon would seek additional funding for the Iron Dome programme over the next three years “based on an annual assessment of Israeli security requirements.”

“My goal is to ensure Israel has the funding it needs each year to produce these batteries that can protect its citizens,” Panetta said. He said the $70 million would be provided this fiscal year, which ends in September.

“This is assistance that, provided Congress concurs, we can move quickly, to ensure no shortage in this important system,” Panetta said in a statement after meeting Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak at the Pentagon. —Reuters

At least 36 die in bus accident in central Vietnam

HANOI, 18 May—At least 36 passengers died when a bus carrying nearly 60 passengers broke the banisters of Serepok Bridge on National Highway 14, which connects Dak Lak and Dak Nong Provinces in central Vietnam, and fell into the river on Thursday night, the Vietnam News Agency reported on Friday.

According to the initial report, the bus, owned by a transport cooperative in Dak Lak Province, some 960 km south of capital Hanoi, was on the way to Ho Chi Minh City. At around 10 pm, while crossing the Serepok Bridge, the vehicle suddenly crashed into the banister and fell into the river, from the height of 18 metres.

Rescue workers and local people were mobilised to save victims. By 3 am, rescue works finalized. A total of 34 people were dead on the spot and other two victims died in Dak Lak hospital, according to the report. —Xinhua

A petrol tanker driver makes a delivery as drivers queue for fuel in Longbourn, central England on Saturday, May 19, 2012. —Reuters

UK climate policy can curb energy price shocks

LONDON, 18 May—Britain’s climate policies can help shield the economy from oil and gas price shocks triggered by external factors such as the Arab Spring, an analysis commissioned by the government showed on Friday.

Energy price spikes can often dent economic growth, business investment and employment, as witnessed during the global financial crisis in mid-2008 when oil rose to nearly $150 per barrel, research group Oxford Economics said in a report.

Yet the negative impact on economic growth could be halved if the UK’s climate policies manage to reduce the country’s demand for coal, gas and oil, it said. The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) revealed the report ahead of the government’s draft Energy Bill that is due to be published next week.

The bill will set out in detail how to reform the UK’s electricity market, as well as how it can attract 110 billion pounds of needed investment to build low-carbon plants. “The more we can shift to alternative fuels, and use energy efficiently, the more we can ensure that our economy does not become hostage to far-flung events and to the volatility of market forces,” Ed Davey, secretary of state for energy and climate change, said in a statement. —Reuters

China’s top legislator Wu Bangguo starts visit to Croatia

BEIJING, 18 May—China’s top legislator Wu Bangguo has arrived in the Croatian Capital, Zagreb, beginning an official goodwill visit to the country. In a written speech released upon his arrival, Wu says China is willing to work with the Croatian side to further advance the comprehensive cooperative partnership between the two countries.

Wu is scheduled to hold separate meetings with Croatian President Ivo Josipovic, Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic and Parliament Speaker Boris Sprem during his six-day tour.

Earlier, Wu met with the presidents of the First and Second Chambers of Croatian parliament, Fred de Graaf and Gerdi Verbeet during his official visit to the Netherlands. China and the Netherlands have reached broad consensus on enhancing bilateral ties and parliamentary exchange. —Xinhua
Amber preserves earliest pollination clue

GRENoble, 18 May—Amber from 100-million-year-old deposits in northern Spain has preserved and revealed the first-ever record of insect pollination, scientists say. Specimens of tiny insects covered with pollen grains in two pieces of Cretaceous-era amber are the first record of pollen transport and social behavior in this group of animals, researchers said.

The amber featured inclusions of thysanopterans, also known as thrips, a group of tiny insects of less than 2 millimeters in length that feed on pollen and other plant tissues, they said.

One of the amber specimens was studied with synchrotron X-ray tomography at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility in Grenoble, to reveal in three dimensions and at very high resolution the pollen grain distribution over the insect’s body. Researchers have determined the pollen is from a kind of cycad or ginkgo tree, a kind of living fossil of which only a few species are known to science, an ESRF release reported on Tuesday.

“This is the oldest direct evidence for pollination, and the only one from the age of the dinosaurs,” said Carmen Soriano, who led the investigation of the amber pieces with X-ray tomography at the ESRF.

The co-evolution of flowering plants and insects, thanks to pollination, is a great evolutionary success story.”

Sumatra said at risk from volcanoes

CRAy convenience, 18 May—Sumatra, hit by deadly earthquakes and tsunamis in recent years, is at risk from another natural phenomenon, researchers say—major volcanic eruptions.

Researchers from Oregon State University, working with colleagues in Indonesia in a study funded by the National Science Foundation, have documented six major volcanic eruptions in Sumatra in the past 35,000 years, and say most of them equalled or surpassed the explosive intensity of the eruption of Washington’s Mount St Helens in 1980.

“Sumatra has a number of active and potentially explosive volcanoes and many show evidence of recent activity,” Morgan Salisbury of the university’s College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences said in an OUS release on Wednesday. “Most of the eruptions are small, so little attention has been paid to the potential for a catastrophic eruption.

“But our study found some of the first evidence that the region has had more explosive history than perhaps has been appreciated,” he said.

The Indian Ocean Region has a volcanic history. The 1883 eruption of Krakatoa between Sumatra and Java has been appreciated,” he said. The region has a much more explosive history than perhaps has been paid to the potential for a catastrophic eruption.

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Wall art from France said world’s oldest

DOMBOvnik, 18 May—Anthropologists say a 1.6-ton block of engraved limestone found in southern France is the earliest evidence of wall art, dating to 37,000 years ago.

US and European researchers have been excavating at Abri Castanet, the site of the discovery, for the past 15 years, calling it one of the oldest sites in Europe bearing artifacts of human symbolism.

The site has yielded pierced animal teeth, pierced shells, ivory and soapstone beads, engravings, and paintings on limestone slabs of the Aurignacian culture of the Upper Paleolithic era, which was located in Europe and southwest Asia.

“Early Aurignacian humans functioned, more or less, like humans today,” said New York University anthropology Professor Randall White, one of the study’s co-authors.

“They had relatively complex social identities communicated through personal ornamentation, and they practiced sculpture and graphic arts,” he said in an NYU release on Tuesday.

An engraved block of limestone in what had been a rock shelter occupied by a group of Aurignacian reindeer hunters includes depictions of animals and geometric forms, researchers said.

“This art appears to be slightly older than the famous Grotte Chauvet in southeastern France,” White said, referring to the cave paintings discovered in 1994. “The co-evolution of flowering plants and insects, thanks to pollination, is a great evolutionary success story.”

China search giant Baidu enters phone wars

BEIJING, 18 May—Baidu, China’s Internet search giant, has announced its intention to enter the mass smartphone market with a phone running its own mobile operating system.

The low-cost Changhai H5018, to be built by Foxconn, will be powered by Baidu’s own ChinaOS. With a price tag of less than $158 it will face fierce competition in the low-end smartphone market, analysts said, as Baidu attempts to create a significant presence in China’s booming mobile arena boasting the largest number of smartphone users in the world.

Low-cost smartphones by companies such as Huawei Technologies, ZTE Corp, HTC, Lenovo and Xiaomi are competing in that market, but Baidu’s director of international communications said he felt the H5018 would do well.

“It’s a terrific market opportunity for us, and Baidu is constantly adjusting, understanding what users are interested in, Kaiser Kuo told BBC News.

The phone will be baked with 100GB of cloud storage on Wangpan, the Chinese equivalent of Dropbox or Google Drive.

“The new handset is integrated with the cloud—and with our 100GB offering, I think that no one will be able to match that,” Kuo said.

Patient moves robotic arm by thoughts

PROVIDENCE, 18 May—Two US patients paralyzed by stroke learned to make reach-and-grasp movements with a robotic arm, guided by their thoughts, researchers say.

The trial’s lead investigator, Dr Leigh Hochberg—an associate professor of engineering at Brown University in Providence, RI, and a critical care neurologist at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston—said the trial is evaluating an investigational device, the BrainGate neural interface system.

The system is a type of brain-computer interface intended to put robotics and other assistive technology under the brain’s control, Hochberg said.

The device is a baby aspirin-sized square of silicon containing 100 hair-thin electrodes that can record the activity of small groups of brain cells. It is implanted into the motor cortex, a part of the brain that directs movement, Hochberg said.

A report published in Nature highlighted the potential for long-term use and durability of the BrainGate system, part of which is implanted in the brain to capture the signals underlying intentional movement.

“For all of us involved, we were encouraged that the research is making the kind of progress that we had all hoped,” Hochberg said in a statement. “Years after the onset of paralysis, we found that it was still possible to record brain signals that carry multidimensional information about movement and that these signals could be used to move an external device.”

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“This art appears to be slightly older than the famous Grotte Chauvet in southeastern France,” White said, referring to the cave paintings discovered in 1994.
Students can have fun without booze

PROVIDENCE, 18 May—Research indicates students in college can have as good a time at a party if they don’t drink. US researchers suggest Lori Scott-Sheldon of the Miriam Hospital in Providence, RI, analyzed data from 19 studies involving more than 1,400 US college students.

The study, published in the journal Psychology of Addictive Behavior, found students were less likely to drink alcohol when their beliefs about the positive effects of drinking were challenged.

“Being aware that it isn’t the alcohol that causes the outcomes, but the positive expectancies associated with alcohol, may help you limit or avoid drinking,” Scott-Sheldon said in a statement.

Scott-Sheldon suggested young people list what they expectancies.—

US HIV aid has prevented 741,000 deaths

People gather around lit candles to mark the upcoming World AIDS Day in Kathmandu on 30 November, 2011. The United States foreign aid programme that sends billions of dollars to African countries for HIV treatment and prevention has cut the number of people dying for any reason in those nations, a new study suggests. Researchers had previously shown that the Global AIDS Policy—Emerging Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR — had prevented deaths from AIDS. But it was unclear if more people in those countries were only dying of tuberculosis or malaria instead, researchers explained. According to the new findings, about 741,000 deaths were averted in 2004 through 2008 in the 12 African countries with PEPFAR programmes, such as Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

Apple readies iPhone with bigger screen

Tokyo, 18 May—Apple Inc plans to use a larger screen on the next-generation iPhone and has begun to place orders for the new displays from suppliers in South Korea and Japan, people familiar with the situation said.

The new iPhone screens will measure 4 inches from corner to corner, one source said. That would represent a roughly 30 percent increase in viewing area, assuming Apple keeps other dimensions proportional. Apple has used a 3.5-inch screen since introducing the iPhone in 2007.

Early production of the new screens has begun at three suppliers: Korea’s LG Display Co., Sharp Corp. and Japan Display Inc, a Japanese government-backed merger combining the production networks of three companies. It is likely all three of the screen suppliers will get production orders from Apple, which could begin as soon as June. That would allow the new iPhone to go into production as soon as August, if the company follows its own precedent in shifting from Asia to Europe.

The US Unite Unite nation said 94 percent of those polled voted in favour of changes to working conditions and that some 700 jobs would be created at the plant, securing its future until 2020.

It’s almost certain that one of GM’s German plants will now be closed, probably the plant in Bochum, “a source close to the negotiations said.

GM, which sells under the Volkswagen brand in Britain, is expected to halt production of all cars and van models at its plant in Wolfsburg, Germany, from 2016.

Astra

London, 18 May—General Motors Co (GM.N) will build the next generation of Opel Astra in Britain, after workers at its factory in Ellesmere Port, northwest England, overwhelmingly agreed to a new labor deal, leaving its plant in Bochum, Germany in danger of closure.

The US carmaker said on Thursday it would invest 125 million pounds ($194 million) in the Ellesmere Port plant, where assembly of the new vehicle will start in 2015.

Britain’s Unite union said 94 percent of those ballots voted in favour of changes to working conditions and that some 700 jobs would be created at the plant, securing its future until 2020. It’s almost certain that one of GM’s German plants will now be closed, probably the plant in Bochum, “a source close to the negotiations said.

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The source added that “GM, which sells under the Volkswagen brand in Britain, is expected to halt production of all cars and van models at its plant in Wolfsburg, Germany, from 2016.

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Motorboats under maintenance before rainy season

Township Writers Association reconstituted in Yankin Township

Cash donated to fund for construction of walls

Respects paid to doyen literati

Self-reliant supply of electricity undertaken in Yedashe Township

Workshop on rights of child held in Sittway

Kamayut reconstitutes writers association

EXHIBITION OPENED: Yangon ICT Exhibition was opened at Tawmaw Convention Hall on U Wisara Road in Yangon on 11 May. Yangon Region Minister for Electricity and Industry U Nyan Tun Oo presents prize to Daw Khin Sanda

Child-centred teaching course 12-22 May
Towards a sound financial system: Regime Change

By San Thein

Myanmar has opened a new chapter in its financial sector by launching a new exchange rate regime of ‘managed floating exchange rate’ on the 1st day of April 2012, thereby abandoning its 35 year-old regime where the official rate of national currency ‘Kyat’ was pegged to the International Monetary Fund’s Special Drawing Right (SDR) at the rate of 8.58047 kyats per unit of SDR since 1977. It was indeed a bold step taken by the monetary authority. The main purpose of this far sighted move is to reinforce the momentum of the current economic reforms taken by the government. It ended the era of unrealistic exchange rate regime where official value of kyat in terms of the country’s trading currencies had been grossly overvalued and impeded trade and investment. Under the new system, the external value of kyat will be determined not by the monetary authority but by the market forces of supply and demand. Being the monetary authority of the country, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) is solely responsible for implementing a sound monetary policy for stabilizing the exchange rates so as to facilitate the smooth functioning of the country’s trade and payment system to achieve a sustainable growth in the economy.

Multiple exchange rates

Pegging to the SDR under the old system had produced an overvalued official exchange rate and multiple currencies practices. Apart from the official rate of around 6 kyats per US dollar, there were black market rate, FIC rate, export earning rate, account transfer rate, Hundi rate etc. which had severely complicated business activities and drastically reduced the investors-confidence. Distortion in officially reported data, hindrances to trade and investment, and volatility in exchange rates were among the major factors causing negative impacts on the economy.

The new exchange rate regime, if properly implemented, will reverse the above negative impacts on the economy.

Importance of exchange rate

Expressing external value of local currency in terms of foreign currencies, an exchange rate regime links the domestic economy with the rest of the world through trade and investment. It serves as a major determinant of a country’s international competitiveness. Foreign demand for a country’s products depends not only on the prices expressed in its own currency but also on the conversion rates of foreign currencies into that currency. Depending on a country’s prevailing economic and political situation, a country with an appreciating currency may encounter trade deficits and unemployment problems. Volatility in exchange rates would jeopardize the country’s trade and investment. A stable and predictable exchange rate regime facilitates promotion of the country’s external performance.

Recent developments in exchange rates

Hovering around K 1000 per USD during the first half of 2010, the dollar value of Myanmar kyat declined considerably in 2011, reaching its lowest level in August 2011. Consequently, all the exporters were severely affected by this abrupt fall in the value of USD. Between January 2010 and November 2011, the rate declined from K1000 to K800 per US dollar, a 25 percent decline. Meanwhile, the appreciation of kyat by 28-30 percent and thus weakening the competitiveness of local exporters in international markets.

Given these unprecedented exchange rate developments, one would wonder whether the country is suffering from the notorious Dutch disease caused by increased revenues from the sales of natural resources, while the local currency is appreciating against its trading currencies, reducing the competitiveness of its exports - a major cause of concern for the authority especially while the country is pursuing an export-led growth economic policy.

Technical assistance from IMF

As a member of the International Monetary Fund, Myanmar receives technical assistance from the institution which is convinced that this is an opportune time for Myanmar to change its exchange rate regime to have a market determined exchange rate while the country possesses a respectable amount of foreign exchange reserves due mainly to natural gas exports and inflows of foreign direct investment. With the cooperation of the International Monetary Fund, the monetary authority is trying to unify the exchange rates and lift restrictions on current international payments and transfers.

Step-by-step approach to exchange rate unification

The monetary authority tries to implement its unification agenda in a step by step manner. First in October 2011, it allowed six private sector banks (later 17 private banks) to become licensed money changers. Each bank displays at its cash counter windows the reference rates for the US dollar (sell-buy rates for foreign currencies (the US dollar, FIC, the euro and Singaporean dollar). Anybody can come to the booth and buy and sell these currencies. In this way the central bank creates a currency market which helps the local banks familiarize foreign exchange dealing and seeks their cooperation in stabilizing the exchange rates.

Then in November 2011, the central bank authorized foreign exchange dealer licensees to eleven private banks to engage in international banking. Starting from April 2012, the Central Bank of Myanmar tries to manage the exchange rates by holding foreign exchange auctions daily with these eleven domestic private banks. These banks submit their daily proposals to buy/sell foreign exchange of US dollars to the central bank. Based on these proposals, the central bank announces its daily reference exchange rates for the day’s trading. The reference rate is used to set the mid-rate in both retail and wholesale currency markets. In the retail markets, banks’ currency exchange counters can set their own rates within the bands of plus or minus 0.8 percent of the reference rate whereas the spread is narrowed to plus or minus 0.3 percent for wholesale inter-bank markets. In this way, the central bank, acting as one of the market players in currency markets tries to set its market-determined reference rates through daily auctions.

Recently, the monetary authority has scrapped the so-called ‘export earning rate’, which served as a major restriction on imports. Under this new policy, importers are free to use their money in their FE accounts in importing things from abroad. Import permits will be granted without securing whether the FE balances are export proceeds or not. The move would reduce market segmentation and ease appreciation pressure on the economy. Moreover, restriction on withdrawal of foreign currency from one’s account has been relaxed: up to the amount of US$ 10,000 can be withdrawn from one’s FE account with one of the state-owned foreign trade banks, and for the amount over US$ 10,000, settlement can be made by domestic account transfers. With the move, the Central Bank of Myanmar will stop injecting new FECs into circulation and FECs will gradually be phased out.

Avoidance of dollarization

In unifying the exchange rates, the important role of our national currency ‘Kyat’ in the payment system should be preserved. The currency should be the linchpin of the country’s payment system. The US dollar, although it is an international currency, should by no means be permitted to undermine the role of Kyat in the country’s financial system. Dollarization of the financial system should be avoided. Otherwise it will replace the local currency, like in some ASEAN countries, in domestic pricing and trading of goods and services. To be able to avoid dollarization, the foreign exchange earnings from exports of goods and services should be surrendered at prevailing market rates and importers should be allowed to acquire necessary foreign exchange at prevailing rates which are stable and predictable.

Fire destroys two houses in Ye

Fire destroyed two houses in Ye

Ye, 18 May—A fire broke out at a house on 3rd street in Thirianda Ward of Yenin Mon State at 3.15 pm on 13 May. Members of Fire Services department, members of Auxiliary Fire Brigade and local people put out the fire with the use of fire engines and private water tankers and the fire died out at 3.55 pm.

Two houses were destroyed in the fire.

Nav Myo Htut (Ye)

New tractors transported to state and region governments

Nav Pr.Tow, 18May—New Holland 4010 brand tractors presented through India-Myanmar goodwill programmes on recently were transported to States and Regions.

Along the routes, local farmers were interested in usage of new tractors.

In an interview with those from the group-heading for Kayah State, the responsible persons replied that Combine KS 9300 harvesters and New Holland 4010 brand tractors were sent under the friendship programme to State and Region governments for development of agricultural sector.

Kyermon
### Formation of Union Peace-making Work...

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<td>(g) Lt-Gen Ko Ko Union Minister, Home Affairs Ministry</td>
<td>3. The Union Peace-making Central Committee shall be obliged to set policies for and supervise functions of Union Peace-making Work Committee.</td>
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<td>(h) Lt-Gen Hla Min Union Minister, Defence Ministry</td>
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| | **S’d/ Thein Sein** President Republic of the Union of Myanmar |

### Formation of Union Peace-making Work...

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| | **S’d/ Thein Sein** President Republic of the Union of Myanmar |
Kayah farmers observe Palethwe hybrid paddy plantations in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 18 May—Kayah farmers observed Palethwe hybrid paddy plantation near Aungchantha Village, Zabuthiri Township, here yesterday morning. The farmers also visited the Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing. Kayah national farmers led by Project Manager Daw Tin May Oo of Care Myanmar Group from Dimawhso Township, Kayah State at 288-acre Palethwe hybrid paddy plantation near Aungchantha Village, Zabuthiri Township, here yesterday morning. Speaking to the farmers, the Union Minister called for a switch to quality and high yield strains to expand and maintain the market. He then presented Palethwe hybrid rice to the farmers who were conducted round 100-day-old Palethwe hybrid paddy plantations by agriculturists.

Sagaing Region Chief Minister inspect foundry in Monywa

NAY PYI TAW, 18 May—Sagaing Region Chief Minister U Tha Aye paid an inspection tour to the foundry of Thiha Tun Co Ltd in Monywa yesterday afternoon and viewed production of small tractors installed with 22 Hp one-cylinder diesel engines, 28 Hp tractor and accessories. He then inspected the sanitation of Thiha Tun Co Ltd in Monywa. The Vice-President and party proceeded to the national badminton gymnasium at the corner of Annawutana Street and Kyonegyi Street. Myanmar Badminton Federation President U Maung Maung Swe reported on condition of badminton courts. The Vice-President inspected the badminton courts on the first and second floors and left necessary instructions. On arrival at the Youth Sports Training Camp (Thuwunna) in Thingangyun Township in the afternoon, the Vice-President and party were welcomed by Myanmar Football Federation President U Zaw Zaw and members, officials of the Ministry of Sports, U-13 selected women footballers and U-14 selected men footballers. U Zaw Zaw reported on lawn preparations of the football ground, progress in extended construction of stands and roofs. The Vice-President inspected extension of sports ground and training of athletes and seats to be installed at the stands and left necessary instructions.

63rd ASEAN Science and Technology Committee Meeting concludes

NAY PYI TAW, 18 May—The 63rd ASEAN Science and Technology Committee Meeting continued for the final day at Myanmar International Convention Centre (MICC) in Zabuthiri Township today, attended by Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Ko Ko Oo, representatives from ASEAN member countries, and representatives from China, EU, Japan and the USA. At the meeting, the development of science and technology and passed resolutions for future plans.

UMFCCI to hold its 21st anniversary in Nay Pyi Taw

YANGON, 18 May—The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry has arranged to hold its 21st anniversary at Myanmar International Convention Centre (MICC) in Nay Pyi Taw at 1:30 pm on 25 May. Not to fail to be present the anniversary, advisors, CEC members, EC members, sister organizations, distinguished persons have been invited and informed for smooth transport to Nay Pyi Taw. Those wishing to join with the transport plan are to dial 214344 to 214349 (Fax-214484) at UMFCCI on Min Ye Kyaw Swa Street in Lannadaw Township, not later than 23 May.

Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham...
Union Minister for Information and for Culture receives representatives of Chinese company

NAY PYI TAW, 18 May—Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hsan received Mr Lu Guooguang and party of Chinese Sports, International Economic and Technological Cooperation Co Ltd.—MNA

How to address climate change in Central Myanmar discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 18 May—National preliminary meeting on implementation of the project to the impact of climate change to water resources and food sufficiency in Myanmar’s arid zone jointly organized by Environmental Conservation and Forestry Ministry and the UNDP took place at Sedona Hotel in Mandalay this morning, with an address by Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister addressed the necessity of addressing climate change as the major threat to survival and prosperity of mankind. Despite the fact that Myanmar is blessed with temperate climate and is making strenuous efforts to conserve the ecological environment, it is now facing the consequences of climate change, Cyclone Nargis and Giri, record high temperatures in central Myanmar and floods and water scarcity are vivid effects of the climate change.

The mitigation of climate change impact and adaptation to climate change are a must. However, such works could not be accomplished by government department alone but with the cooperation of competent organizations, and changing the behavior and lifestyle of each individual.

The project aims to reduce the impact of climate change, increased rainfall and droughts to the farmers in arid zone of Myanmar, to enhance the competence of farmers and to enable the people to adapt to climate change in the future. Shwebo and Monywa in Sagaing Region, Myingyan and NyaungU in Mandalay Region and Chauk in Magway Region are selected as the project areas. The project will last four years. It has been proposed to implement the project under three sections—to address the reduction in fresh water resources areas due to climate change, to produce and breed weather-resistant crops, strains and animals, Information on evaluation of possible loss due to climate change and monitoring climate change.

Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry

Union F&R Minister receives US, Japanese guests separately

NAY PYI TAW, 18 May—Union Minister for Finance and Revenue U Hla Tun received Vice-President for Asia Ms Tami Overby and party of US Chamber of Commerce at the Ministry of Finance and Revenue, here, this morning. They discussed that as the US government is lifting the sanctions against Myanmar step by step due to reforms of the Myanmar government, greater investment opportunities will come into Myanmar; and the US Chamber of Commerce and the UMFCCI will join hands in the tasks for development of economy and for mutual cooperation matters.

The Union Minister also received President & Chief Executive Officer Mr Takashi Hinino and party of Daiwa Securities Group Inc at 10 am.

At the call, they discussed concerted efforts of Daiwa Institute of Research Ltd of Japan, Tokyo Stock Exchange and the Ministry of Finance and Revenue for emergence of stock exchange and investment market in Myanmar; matters related to providing necessary technology and expertise and mutual cooperation between the two countries.

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister U Win Tha and officials.—MNA

UMFCCI to hold talk on 19 May

YANGON, 17 May—The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Action Aid Myanmar have arranged to hold a talk on Understanding the Growth Paradigm-Care for Ecology & Future in Myanmar at UMFCCI Office Tower on Min Ye Kyaw Swa Street in Lanmadaw Township here at 2:00 pm on 19 May.

The talk is to be spread by sharing knowledge of Professor of Public Policy Dr. Marilyn Waring of AUT University in Auckland. Those interested may contact International Relations Department at UMFCCI (Ph: 2143444) Ext—(107), (112).
AFC (C) Certificate Coaching Course, MA Referee’s Course commence

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) (C) Certificate Coaching Course & MA Referee’s Course for Ministry of Defence, jointly organized by Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) and Asian Football Confederation (AFC), was opened at the training school at the head office of MFF on 14 May morning.

At first, trainees were introduced individually. Speaking on the occasion, Myanmar Football Federation President U Zaw Zaw said, “As the trainees are military officers and corporals of young age, it is delighted at prospects of Myanmar football arena. In the golden era of Myanmar football sports when the trophies were achieved in the Asian Olympic Games and Asian Cup, and fair play ward in the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, selected prominent footballers of Tatmadaw Bahadur, Tin Aung (goalkeeper), Ba Yi, etc and referees played in the significant role of the football arena. I firmly believe new generation coaches and referees who are reliable for football arena of Myanmar will emerge from the training course.”

After that, President of Myanmar Football Federation U Zaw Zaw donated 300 footballs to Vice Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Tin Maung Soe. Later, they posed for documentary photo together with the trainees.

Altogether 32 trainees each are attending the Asian Football Confederation (C) Certificate Coaching Course and the MA Referee’s Course.

The former course will last two weeks and the latter, five days.

Zaw Min Aung (107)

MDA to hold educative talk

YANGON, 18 May—Organized by Myanmar Dental Association (Central), an educative talk was held at its hall on Thantthunya Road in Thingangyun Township, here, at 9 am on 20 May with the sponsorship of Zawza. Professor Dr Daw Myint Myint San will give talks on introduction to implant supported fixed prostheses, Dr Myat Nyan on implant Prosthetic Options: Removable Denture Prostheses. Interested dentists, house surgeons and students may attend it.

Myanma Alin

Stake drive for school building in Muse

MUSE, 18 May—The cash donation for construction of new building was held at No. 2 Basic Education High School in Homawan Ward of Muse in Muse District in Shan State (North) on 13 May morning. At first, the township education officer and Chairman of the Construction Committee U Thaung Tun explained the purpose of building the school structure.

Wellwishers donated cash to Township Administrator U Mya Han and officials. The Township Administrator, Hlutaw representatives, the head of District Settlement and Land Records Department, responsible persons of Muse Nationalities Co Ltd and wellwishers drove stakes for the building.

Myanma Alin

Vietnam to invest in rice sector for first time

YANGON, 18 May—According to Myanmar Rice Industry Association, Vietnam has agreed to put investment in paddy production which is the main product of Myanmar.

An official of Myanmar Rice Industry Association said that the main theme of foreign investment is to systematically provide assistance for production of quality rice, development of agricultural technology and operating of rice mills.

“It will be the first time of foreign investments in focusing on development of paddy sector. Vietnam is the rice producing country. On its part will invest about US$ 100 million on development of the paddy sector of Myanmar. At present, Myanmar rice faces competitiveness in the market due to some requirements in its quality and cheap price of India’s rice. However, export of rice from Myanmar is in normal status. There are about 18 million sown acreage of paddy across the nation. The larger number of sown acres is located in Deltaic area of lower Myanmar. Thus, rice of the region can be exported.”

Khin Yadana

Fire breaks out in Mahlaing Township

MAHLAING, 18 May—A fire broke out in Hiedaw Village of Thabukkon Village, six miles south of Mahlaing in Meiktila District on 7.10 pm on 12 May. The fire started from the house of Soe Myint Lay, 42, of the village. The local people put out fire in time not to blaze other houses.

Myanma Alin

Yamethin Township WJA holds plenary meeting

YAMETHIN, 18 May—Organized by Yamethin Township Writers and Journalists Association, the plenary meeting and election of new executives were held at the reading room of Yamethin District Information and Public Relations Department in Yamethin Township on 6 May morning.

Chairman of Township Writers and Journalists Association U Soe Myint recounted his experiences in attending the emergency literary conference. Secretary of the Township WJA U Hlaing Tha Than read the report of the association. Treasurer U Nyunt Shwe submitted the financial statement.

Election commission member Deputy Head of Township General Administration Department U Nyunt Hsan Tun explained the election process. Later, U Tin Hla (Tektah Maung Lu Hla) was elected as Chairman of the Township Writers and Journalists Association, U Nyunt Shwe (Reporter Nyunt Shwe) as Secretary and Daw San San (Aye Mya Aye) as Treasurer.

Myanma Alin

MWEA member leaves for Thailand

YANGON, 18 May—Member of Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs’ Association Ma Phyu Sin Thant left here by air on 13 May morning to attend the SME Cluster Development Training to be held in Mekong Institute of Thailand from 14 to 25 May.

She was seen off at Yangon International Airport by Treasurer Daw Myint Myint Aye of MWEA and executives.

Myanma Alin

Road inaugurated: Self-reliant Khaingthitina concrete road was opened at the road in Ward 7 of Maubin on 10 May. Ward Administrator U Tun, Road Construction Committee Chairman U Tin Shwein and Vice-Chairman U Saw Naing formally opened the road.

District-FPRD

YANGON, 18 May—A ceremony to open the new building of Phu Pwint Wai Library was held in Kalaygyon Village of Bantbwegon Village-tract in Hmawby Township of Yangon Region on 10 May morning.

Staff Officer Daw Khin Thida Oo of Yangon North District Information and Public Relations Department, Deputy Head of Township General Administration Department U San Tun, Writer U Nay Lin (Maung Cho Wai) and Village Administrator U Mya Win formally opened the new building.

At the ceremony, the staff officer of District Information and Public Relations Department explained the purpose of opening the library.

The head of Township Information and Public Relations Department, on behalf of the Myanmar Libraries Foundation, donated 150 books and publications to the Village Administrator.

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District News

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Myanma Alin
Four Turkish soldiers die in clashes with PKK

ANKARA, May 18—Four soldiers of Turkish security forces were killed and five others injured during clashes with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) members on Thursday, local newspaper Today’s Zaman reported on its website.

The clashes happened in the southeastern province of Hatay and eastern province of Hakkari separately, said the report, adding that four PKK members were also killed in the fighting in Hakkari.

PKK members opened fire on security forces in Hatay province when the soldiers were conducting an operation in a forested area in rural area of Azezli, according to a statement posted on the website of Hatay Governor’s Office. Meanwhile, the PKK attacked a military outpost with mortars in Hakkari Province in the town of Derecik in Semdinli on Thursday afternoon, killing one soldier and injuring four others, including one civilian.

The PKK, listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union, took up arms in 1984 in an attempt to create an ethnic homeland in southeastern Turkey. Since then, more than 40,000 people have been killed in conflicts involving the group.

Five hurt in emergency plane landing in Munich

FRANKFURT, May 18—Around five people were injured when a small regional airline made an emergency landing in Munich after smoke was reported in the cockpit and cabin, and skidded off the runway, according to the airport and police.

The Air Dolomiti twin-turboprop ATR 72 was 10 minutes into its flight from Munich to Venice when the pilot requested permission to turn back on account of the smoke, an airport spokesman said. The pilot then reported engine problems as the plane, carrying 58 passengers and four crew, came in to land.

Munich’s southern runway was closed for several hours and 20 flights were diverted to other airports. A TR 5–50 joint venture between EADS and Italy’s Finmeccanica. The European Union, took up arms in 1984 in an attempt to create an ethnic homeland in southeastern Turkey. Since then, more than 40,000 people have been killed in conflicts involving the group.

New York state says jobless rate steady at 8.5 pct

NEW YORK, May 18—New York state’s unemployment rate was unchanged in April from March at 8.5 percent but the state has won back all the private sector jobs lost during the recession, the state’s Department of Labour said on Thursday.

New York’s jobless rate is up from 8 percent in April 2011 and is above the national rate for April of 8.1 percent.

Only four other states have regained all the jobs lost during the Great Recession: Alaska, Louisiana, North Dakota and Texas, said Kevin Jack, a state labour market analyst. The states that are farthest from achieving this goal are California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan and Ohio.

‘Disco Queen’ Donna Summer dead at 63

MIAMI, 18 May—Disco music icon Donna Summer died in Florida on Thursday after a private battle with cancer, TMZ reported. She was 63.

The celebrity news Web site said she had been working on a new album in recent weeks.


New York: Job losses

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The state’s private sector job count now stands at 7,539,600—small timelaps from the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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Oxford invites Nevada Bunny Ranch pimp to debate

Britain’s Oxford University has invited a Nevada brothel owner to participate in a debate about the legalization of prostitution.

Dennis Hof, 65, founder of the Moonlite Bunny Ranch, said he and one of his prostitutes, Cami Parker, will travel to the school to argue for the legalization of prostitution alongside Fiona Godlee, editor-in-chief of the British Medical Journal, and adult entertainer Johnny traffic Anglias, The Sun reported.

Arguing against the legalization of prostitution will be Julie Bindel, author of ‘Sexual Traffic’.

Bees trap Texas couple in bathroom

Texas firefighters said they received a call about hundreds of bees swarming in a house while they were already out on an identical call.

The Marion Fire Department said it received two calls about the insects invading separate homes, KSAT-TV, San Antonio, reported.

“Same call twice in one day is kind of unusual,” Assistant Fire Chief Joseph Rodriguez said.

“I think this is the fourth or fifth call we’ve had for bees this year already. It gets hot and dry and then it rains. That’s what brings them back out. Jason Williams said he was getting ready to watch a movie with wife, Jennifer, when they noticed a few bees in the bedroom and looked around to find hundreds of the insects swarming.

He said the couple hid in a back bathroom and fled the house after dousing some of the bees in a mixture of soap and water.

“There was a lot of bees, man. That’s all I saw was bees everywhere,” Williams said. “It was enough to scare a big guy like me.”

Swamp People” star Mitchell Guist died of apparent natural causes

Louisiana officials said on Wednesday, Assumption Parish Sheriff Mike Waguespack said CNN the alligator hunter appeared to suffer from a seizure and fell backward on Monday on the Intercoastal Waterway.

Attempts to revive Guist, 47, were unsuccessful and he was pronounced dead on Monday at Teche Regional Medical Centre in Morgan City.

Waguespack told E! News on Wednesday the preliminary report from an autopsy performed on the reality TV star’s remains showed Guist died of natural causes.

“More details will be released when the final report is made” in four to five weeks, he said.

E! News said it was unclear whether Guist’s body has been released to his family yet.

“Right now, we’re thinking about him almost every minute,” Brian Catalina, executive producer of The History Channel’s “Swamp People,” told CNN.

“Swamp People” is currently being renewed for five more seasons.

Guist starred on the show alongside his brother, Glenn.

“The two were inseparable. These guys were born in the same house that they both still lived in, up until yesterday. They were two peas in a pod for sure. Neither had ever been married. They were just as brothers as you could be,” Catalina said. —Internet

Jolie buys Pitt helicopter, flying lessons


Jolie, who has six children with Pitt, is a certified helicopter pilot.

“They’ve had a helicopter pad installed in the grounds of their south of France home, Chateau Miraval, so Ange thought it would be nice to buy Brad a helicopter as a surprise present,” the Post quoted an insider as saying. “But even better, he has his private pilot’s license, so he needs to take a few flying lessons, which he’ll start straight away.” —Internet

‘Blown Away’ tops US album chart

Los Angeles, 18 May—Carrie Underwood’s “Blown Away” is No 1 on the US album chart for a second week, Billboard.com reported on Wednesday.

Coming in at No 2 on the Billboard 200 is Adele’s “21,” followed by Lionel Richie’s “Tuskegee” at No 3, the “Now 42” compilation CD at No 4 and Norah Jones’ “Little Broken Hearts” at No 5.

Rounding out the top tier are Silverstern Pickups’ “Neck of the Woods” at No 6, One Direction’s “Up All Night” at No 7, Jack White’s “Blunderbuss” at No 8, Tanya’s “This Is How I Feel” at No 9 and Luke Bryan’s “Tailgates & Tanlines” at No 10. —Internet

Man crashes Lexus into backyard pool

Police in California said they arrested an alleged drunk driver who drove through a cinder block wall and submerged his Lexus in a backyard swimming pool.

The California Highway Patrol said Modesto Cabral, 40, of La Puente was allegedly drunk around 5:25am when he crashed through the wall and plunged his car into a family’s pool, the West Covina San Gabriel Valley Tribune reported.

Office Steve Lion said Cabral, who climbed out the window of the car, suffered only minor injuries. Cabral was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence.

Chocolate pyramid breaks world record

The Quízina Institute of Chocolate & Pastry in California announced it broke the world record for the largest chocolate sculpture by recreating a Mexican pyramid.

The sculpture of the Kukulcán pyramid in Chichen Itza, created by corporate chef François Mellet, measures 6 feet high and 12 feet by 12 feet at its base.

Guinness World Records confirmed the 18,239.5-pound sculpture.

Actor Nick Stahl reported missing

Los Angeles, 18 May—Nick Stahl’s wife Rose has reported the actor missing, the Los Angeles Police Department confirmed.

Stahl, 32, is best known for his roles in “Sin City,” “In the Bedroom,” “Bully,” “Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines” and “The Man Without a Face.” The former child actor also starred in HBO’s “Carnivale” and has amassed more than a dozen film and TV credits in the past three years.

His wife filed a missing person’s report Monday, stating she last saw him on 9 May and fears his disappearance is drug-related, TMZ said.

Stahl’s representative declined to comment on the situation, the celebrity news Web site said. —Internet

Penn and Nemcova reconcile

Los Angeles, 18 May—Petra Nemcova resumed dating ex-boyfriend Hollywood star Sean Penn shortly after ending her engagement to Jamie Belman, sources told USMagazine.com. The Czech fashion model called off her wedding plans with the British actor last month.

The couple had been together for about two years. “Petra started going on dates with Sean right after the split,” an insider told USMagazine.com.

Nemcova, 32, and Penn, 51, first dated for a few weeks in 2008. Nemcova was previously engaged to Simon Alliec, who died in the 2004 tsunami that hit South Asia, where the paar were on holiday. Penn has two adult children with ex-wife actress Robin Wright. They were a couple for more than 20 years before their divorce was finalized in July 2010.

Carrie Underwood

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Liverpool to a disappointing Wednesday after leading and he'll be talking to them have permission to talk to them always said that when a big Whelan told Sky Sports: “I've Wigan chairman Dave sacked on Wednesday. from Kenny Dalglish who was permission to speak to Wigan It becomes more feasible when not always translate to reality. his arrival in South Korea on 31-year-old told reporters on this day and age of football desire to stay on at the English Premier League giants.—Reuters

Park Keen to stay at Man United

Wigan manager Martinez to hold talks with Liverpool

Liverpool, 18 May—Liverpool have been granted permission to speak to Wigan Athletic manager Roberto Martinez about taking over from Kenny Dalglish who was sacked on Wednesday. Wigan chairman Dave Whelan told Sky Sports: “I’ve always said that when a big club comes in, the manager will have permission to talk to them... and... they don’t come any bigger than Liverpool.”

I gave him permission and he’ll be talking to them soon. I don’t know when, but it will be quite soon.” Dalglish was sacked on Wednesday after leading Liverpool to a disappointing runners-up to rivals Manchester City, without a medal for the first time since he joined the club in 2005. He appeared in 17 league matches and scored just twice, sparking speculation that he could leave.

Park, entering the final year of his contract, admithe had a disappointing season. “But I want to forget the past and think about what I have to do in the future,” he said. “I do not have time to think about next season. I need to rest mentally and physically.”

Internet

Internet

Athens, 18 May—The Olympic torch was formally handed over from Greek organizers of the London 2012 Olympic Games in ceremony here on Thursday.

In damp weather at the Panathenaic Stadium that hosted the 1986 Olympics, the torch was presented to Princess Anne by the president of the Hellenic Olympic Committee, Spyros Capralos.

“It is with deep emotion and exceptional honor that I hand over the Olympic flame, wishing you every success in the organization of the Olympic Games in London,” Capralos said.

Princess Anne, Queen Elizabeth II’s daughter, who is a former Olympian and current British Olympic Association president, headed a British delegation that included London 2012 chairman Sebastian Coe, Olympics Minister Hugh Robertson and London Mayor Boris Johnson.

“For the past eight days our two countries have connected in a very special way in the spirit of peace and friendship of the flame and the values of this Great Olympic movement,” Coe said in reference to the Greek torch relay that has been running since the torch was lit at Olympia last week.

“Today’s handover in Britain were getting ready to welcome the torch. The Olympic cauldron about celebrating the best athletes in the world, the Olympic spirit is about celebrating the best in ourselves and our neighborhoods.

AC Milan sign midfielders Montolivo and Traore

Milan, 18 May—AC Milan have strengthened their midfield with the signing of Italy’s Riccardo Montolivo and Mattia Biagiare Traore who were both free agents, the Serie A runners-up said on Thursday.

Montolivo, 27, spent seven years at Fiorentina, where he was club captain, scoring 17 goals in 236 appearances, while 27-year-old Traore, who has joined from AS Nancy, scored 11 goals in 72 games in all competitions for the French Ligue 1 side.

Montolivo has signed a four-year deal, while Traore has joined on a three-year contract. Milan are rebuilding having last week also said goodbye to seasoned campaigners Gennaro Gattuso, Filippo Inzaghi, Gianluca Zambrotta, Alessandro Nesta and Mark van Bommel. Midfielder Clarence Seedorf has also been linked in the Italian media with a move to Brazilian side Botafogo.

Milan added on their website (www.acmilan.com) that Massimo Ambrosini, who signed a one-year contract extension on Wednesday, will keep the captain’s armband next season.

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson (R) with English forward Michael Owen for a training session in Manchester, north-west England, on 22 February, 2012. United have called time on Owen’s Old Trafford career after the striker revealed on Thursday that he would not be offered a new contract by the club.

Wigan Athletic manager Roberto Martinez during their English Premier League match against Stoke City, on 22 February, 2012.—Reuters

Online sports

Ryan Palmer plays a shot from a sand trap on the first green during first round play in the 2012 Masters Golf Tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club, on 5 April, 2012.—Reuters

Ryan Palmer plays a shot from a sand trap on the second green during first round play in the 2012 Masters Golf Tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club, on 5 April, 2012.—Reuters

RSA

Ryan Palmer plays a shot from a sand trap on the second green during first round play in the 2012 Masters Golf Tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club, on 5 April, 2012.—Reuters

Four-time FA Cup winners Wigan Athletic have officially given permission to talk to Manchester United’s new manager David Moyes about their popular and hugely influential midfielder. 

Wigan manager Paul Parker, who signed a one-year contract extension on Sunday, were among a group of seven players knotted on 16 points. 

“Today’s handover is an occasion of international significance and of course a fine end to the season with a FA Cup final. Although Wigan finished a lowly 15th they had

Pacesetting Palmer eyes redemption in Texas

Announcing Palmer’s departure will be the best thing for Manchester United and the club are fully supportive of his decision,” said chairman Conor O’Farrell.

Opening round.

The 35-year-old American made the most of ideal scoring conditions at the TPC Four Seasons Resort Las Colinas, firing a flawless six-under-par 66 to grab a bogey-free round. Americans Scott Piercy, Charley Hoffman, Bill Land and Matt Kuchar, the world number five who won the Players Championship on Sunday, were among a group of seven players knocked on 66. Though Palmer struggled with his driving over the last four holes on the challenging layout, he was delighted to stay at the top of the leaderboard, largely thanks to his superb short game. “I had big putts on both my last four tee shots and I fought my way in,” the Texan told reporters after making three birdies on each nine.

“I kinda locked up on my tee shots, but what’s the short game is there for, and fortunately it was good today. It’s great to be in this spot again.”

“Continuation from last year, that’s what’s cool about the whole thing. It was great. Feels like all morning, warm-up was great. I knew everything was going in the right direction.—Reuters

UEFA announces Champions League referee

Geneva, 18 May—Portuguese referee Pedro Proença will take charge of this weekend’s Champions League final between Chelsea and Bayern Munich, UEFA announced on Thursday.

Proença, 41, made his international debut in 2003 and has now officiated in more than 65 Europa League games. This year he has officiated in five Champions League games, including the round of 16 return leg between Inter Milan and Marseille.

He also refereed two Europa League matches, including the first leg of the quarter final between FC Schalke 04 and Stale Solbakken.

Olympic torch handed over to London delegation

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“We have permission to speak to Wigan and the mayor of London has given us permission to talk to them. We don’t come any bigger than Liverpool.”

“Wigan manager Martinez to hold talks with Liverpool

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“I gave him permission and he’ll be talking to them soon. I don’t know when, but it will be quite soon.” Dalglish was sacked on Wednesday after leading Liverpool to a disappointing runne
**Focus Myanmar TV Programme**

**MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL**
(19-5-12 09:30 am - 20-5-12 09:30 am) MST
* News
* Adventurous Journey to Bontalar Waterfall
* News
* The more you see, the more you learn
* News
* Kid’s Talent “The Legends of Myanmar” (Part-2)
* News
* Their Traditions and hot-air balloon competition
* News
* Culture Stage
* Development of Rural Areas...
  Benefits of Milk Cow Breeding
* News
* 3rd Annual Traditional Costume and Food Fair
* News
* How to choose where to eat (Padonmar Restaurant)
* News
* Ever Blooming Flower
* * News
* * News
* * News
* * News
* * News
* * News

**RMMGC 3rd Anniversary Charity golf tournament to kicks off on 26 May**

**Yangon, 18 May**—The RMMGC 3rd Anniversary Charity golf tournament, organized by Royal Mingaladon Golf & Country Club, will be held on a grand scale at the above-mentioned golf club on 26 May. The incomes from the golf tournament will be donated to the orphanage associations. Any one may take part in the tournament with entrance fee.

The tournament will be categorized as two classes through System 36. Handsome prizes will be awarded to the winners. For further information, dial 01-639445, 01-639435-9 and hotline phone 09-863639.

**Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas**

**Weather forecast for 19th May, 2012**

***Summary of recent rainfall***

No. Regions/States

- 7 Taninthayi 32/90 25/77 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 19 Neighbouring Yangon 35/95 25/77 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 18 Neighbouring Nay Pyi Taw 39/102 24/75 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 17 Ayeyawady 38/100 29/84
- 14 Southern Shan 29/84 18/64 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 13 Rakhine 35/95 27/81 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 10 Mandalay 42/108 29/84 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 9 Magway 43/109 29/84 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 8 Bago 35/95 27/81 Likelihood of scattered rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 4 Chin 29/84 15/59 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)
- 3 Kayin 32/90 24/75
- 2 Kayah 32/90 22/72 Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers (60%)

**Gong Li’s Singaporean husband confirms divorce rumours**

**Brunei, 18 May**—China-born actress Gong Li’s husband, Singaporean businessman Ooi Hoe Seong, confirmed on Wednesday that they got divorced three years ago reported Chinese media. “This is true... Gong Li and I are indeed divorced,” Ooi told Chinese media. Ooi revealed that they had “never quarrelled” in their 13 years together, but eventually decided to amicably part ways in 2009 because of the nature of their work. “She is active actress who often goes overseas to shoot. I am a businessman who often travels overseas on business. These few years, we have been apart more often than we have been together.”

There was more friendship than romantic love between us,” explained Ooi. He went on to stress that they may no longer be man and wife, but they still kept in touch.

“It was an amicable separation with no conflicts over asset division... We are still good friends and call each other during Christmas and the Lunar New Year,” said Ooi. Ooi also shed light on Gong’s controversial decision to become a Singaporean in 2008. “She loves China very much. All her relatives are in China. “The real reason why Gong Li became a Singaporean, besides showing her loyalty and commitment to our marriage, was that it also made it more convenient for her to travel around the globe for her film projects,” said Ooi.

When asked about reports that claimed Gong is now in a relationship with a Frenchman F.Y. Penalver, Ooi said he did not know anything about it, but would “sincerely wish them well” if the reports turn out to be true. Ooi appeared to still care a great deal for his ex-wife. He described Gong as a “very good person”, and requested that the media not cause her any trouble—Internet
Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal and party leave for ROK

YANGON, 18 May—A delegation led by Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Thein Soe left here by air at 10 am today to attend the Asian Constitutional Tribunals and Similar Organizations Conference to be held in Seoul of the Republic of Korea at the invitation of Chairman of Constitutional Tribunal of the Republic of Korea Mr Lee Kook Kook.

They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Members of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Hsan Myint and U Myint Kyaing and officials.

Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Thein Soe was accompanied by member of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Soe Thein.

Educational fund contributed to Mawlamyine MTE

NAV Pyi Taw, 18 May—The retirees and officials in service with the Myanma Timber Enterprise contributed cash assistance to education of offspring students of the enterprise at the Deputy General Manager’s Office of Myanma Timber Enterprise in Mawlamyine of Mon State yesterday.

The wellwishers donated K 2.24 million for a total of 112 students ranging from basic education primary to higher education level from Tanimthayi Region, Kayin State and Mon State.

Ancient giant turtle fossil was size of smart car

SUNDAY DAILY, 18 May—Picture a turtle the size of a Smart car, with a shell large enough to double as a kiddie pool. Paleontologists from North Carolina State University have found just such a specimen — the fossilized remains of a 60-million-year-old South American giant that lived in what is now Colombia.

The turtle in question is Carboneymysoffenix, which means “coal turtle,” and is part of a group of side-necked turtles known as pelomedusoids. The fossil was named Carboneymysoffenix because it was discovered in 2005 in a coal mine that was part of northern Colombia’s Cerrejon formation. The specimen’s skull measures 24 centimeters, roughly the size of a regulation NFL football. The shell which was recovered nearby — and is believed to belong to the same species — measures 172 centimeters, or about 5 feet 7 inches, long. That’s the same height as Edwin Cadena, the NC State doctoral student who discovered the fossil.

“We had recovered smaller turtle specimens from the site.”

Noteworthy amounts of rainfall (18-5-2012)

Pyapon (1.61) inches
Kyaikkhami (1.54) inches
Mawlamyine (1.26) inches
Maubin (0.94) inch
Kawthaung (0.94) inch
Hmawby (0.71) inch

US HIV aid has prevented 741,000 deaths


Pacesetting Palmer eyes redemption in Texas

Ryan Palmer plays a shot from a sand trap on the second green during first round play in the 2012 Masters Golf Tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club, on 5 April, 2012.